

Subject: Re: Who's everybody listening to?
Date: Sun, 15 Feb 1998 06:57:52 -0500
From: Manor <manor@prodigy.net>
Organization: Prodigy Internet
Newsgroups: rec.music.dylan

Martin McGowan wrote:
>Who's everybody listening to?

For the last 3 weeks or so I've been listening to Peter Stone Brown's brilliant "Up Against It."

This record has a familiar feel - an effortless mixing of rock, country, folk, and blues into a sound that makes it accessible from the first listen and yet 45-50 plays later (I've been listening to this a LOT,) I keep finding things diverse and just plain strange. This record and this artist are the real thing, and there are any number of better known artists who would give their eye teeth to be able to produce work that rewards on as many levels as Up Against It. The mostly-Texas based musicians used in these sessions are solid (among them is Cindy Cashdollar - a contributor to Time Out of Mind,) but ultimately, this is a singer's album. Citing an artist's influences is always a tricky proposition, but when I listen to PSB, I'm reminded of the vocal authority of Waylon Jennings, the laconic humor of Bobby Bare at his best, and the originality of phrasing of Bob Dylan.

Peter Stone Brown and Up Against It's story is an interesting one - a debut album by an artist in his mid-forties, the album self financed and shopped around at length before an independent label finally bit. (I stumbled upon it through reading PSB's essay on bobblyan.com which was followed by an "about the author" paragraph that included a link to soundclips of his songs at his label's website.) The fact that this album came so close to never existing is one more in a long list of indictments against the general state of the music industry. Still, part of the heart and soul I think I hear in this record seems to be tied to the struggle that making it must have been. For me, the common tie of virtually all great music is a communicated sense of the absolute need for expression on the part of the artist. I've always heard that in Dylan - a guy who sounds like he would've died several times over had he not created the work he has - and I hear it in Peter Stone Brown. When an artist has to fight for this chance at expression, it can have the effect of raising the stakes involved in the creative process. On Up Against It, Peter Stone Brown gives the sense his very existence is at stake and the result is an album of sustained conviction.

(I hope I haven't gone on at too much non-Bob length, but PSB's regular postings add much to the content and style of RMD and so I thought a couple of paragraphs to recommend a work that, IMHO, has great appeal for most of Bob's audience, is perhaps not badly out of line.)

What's everyone listening to??

Subject: New Marc Cohn Album (a dash of Dylan content)

Date: 20 Mar 1998 00:19:31 GMT

From: mackechnie@aol.com (MacKechnie)

Organization: AOL <http://www.aol.com>

Newsgroups: rec.music.dylan

After a 5-year hiatus, Marc Cohn's third album, "Burning the Daze," was released on Tuesday by Atlantic Records. If you haven't heard the man, I recommend the purchase of any (and all---if your budget allows) of his albums. You might remember him from one of his songs that made it big on the charts, "Walking in Memphis." He is one of the top songwriters/performers in the country, and I've found that Dylan fans are usually (though not inevitably) Cohn fans.

Dylan band member Larry Campbell plays (an excellent) acoustic guitar accompaniment on the last song of the new album, a truly fine track entitled "Ellis Island." Check out tracks "Healing Hands" (used on an episode of "E.R.") and "Girl of Mysterious Sorrow," too. Great album. Bravo, Marc! Don't wait five years for the next one. . . .

There's a lot about Cohn that reminds me of our own Peter Stone Brown---whose album is also terrific. Get that one while your at it, too. . .

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Russ MacKechnie